



United States Department of Agriculture

IOWA CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS

August/September 2016

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NATURAL RESOURCES
CONSERVATION SERVICE
www.ia.nrcs.usda.gov



CRP Scene, Lucas County

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a **Message** from the **State Conservationist**



Kurt Simon,
State Conservationist

Pathway to Our Future

I had the pleasure of joining Assistants State Conservationist for Field Operations Jamie Carpenter and Kevin McCall, Soil Conservationist Ava Haun, State Public Affairs Officer Laura Crowell and several state partners on a summer tour for the NRCS and state interns. More than 25 college students from across the country toured the LICA conservation farm near Melbourne. The students saw many conservation practices including a CREP wetland and a bioreactor.

It was exciting to meet many enthusiastic young conservationists. I appreciate every office and staff member that mentored these students. Investing in their experience is investing in the future of our agency and of voluntary conservation.



IOWA CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS

Current Developments is a product of the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service in Des Moines, Iowa, published bimonthly by the Iowa NRCS Public Affairs Staff in cooperation with NRCS and partner agency employees from across the state.

CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS STORIES AND PHOTOS

Please submit your Current Developments story ideas and photos to State Public Affairs Specialist Laura Crowell at laura.crowell@ia.usda.gov. Past issues can be found at www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detailfull/ia/people/employees/?cid=nrcs142p2_008273



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ATLANTIC PATHWAYS STUDENTS: MEET AND GREET

Joshua Simon, Atlantic Office Intern

Southern University and A&M College in Baton Rouge, LA

Major: Urban Forestry and Natural Resources

Minor: Plant and Soil Science

School organizations:

- Southern University Urban Forestry Club President
- Southern University MANRRS (Minorities in Agriculture Natural Resources and Related Sciences) Club-Vice President
- Pi Sigma Epsilon Fraternity Inc Member



Lindsey Kaufan, Atlantic Office Intern

Agriculture Education, Major

Agriculture Business, Minor

South Dakota State University

Growing up, I lived on an acreage near my family's farm. I started helping my dad on the farm when I started taking agriculture classes in high school. These classes sparked my interest in agriculture that continues today. This summer has allowed me to broaden my knowledge in agriculture and better understand the practices my family has and are implementing on the farm.



A FAIR TO REMEMBER: SEC. VILSACK VISITS USDA BOOTH

USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack visits with Assistant State Conservationist for Partnerships Marty Adkins at the Team USDA booth at the 2016 Iowa State Fair. This year's booth featured monarchs and pollinators and included free milkweed seeds as prizes for participants.



BACK IN THE DAY



From the National NRCS Photo Gallery

This former Outreach Coordinator, Resource Conservationist, and RC&D Coordinator is now the Easement Specialist for SE Iowa and a member of the Women Land and Legacy State Team—Tanya Meyer-Dideriksen.

Do you have a photo for Back in the Day? Please send it to Laura Crowell at 210 Walnut Street, RM 693 Neal Smith Federal Building, Des Moines, IA, 50309 or laura.crowell@ia.usda.gov.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY: COMMUNICATION & CONFLICT

Article by: Jody Peek

Soil Conservationist, Ottumwa FO

On Aug. 18, NRCS employees, State employees and partners gathered in Ankeny for the Annual Professional Development Event hosted by the Federal Women's Program (FWP). Nicky Williams, FWP Special Emphasis Program Manager and Kurt Simon, State Conservationist, welcomed more than 125 attendees.

Keynote speakers included Matt Booth, who is an internationally known attitude expert. Booth focused on the importance of having good communication in the workplace. He emphasized that "Good communication = Understanding." In other words, if people understand what you are saying, then you have communicated what you wanted to say.

Booth also reviewed the three learning styles people use to communicate (visual, auditory, and kinesthetic). "Knowing the learning style of whom you are speaking with is beneficial in being able to effectively communicate with that person in the work place," he said.

Motivational speaker Dave "The Chef" Sheffield was the second speaker of the day. He addressed

"Conflict Management in the Workplace & Working with Difficult People." He gave examples of hot situations such as "Compliance Issues" that we may deal with in our day-to-day jobs. Sheffield encouraged employees to be good listeners and to know your facts, as that will build trust and help resolve conflict.

More than 99 percent of attendees said they would attend a similar event in 2017. The FWP Team plans to host another event next year with a goal to increase attendance.



Morning keynote speaker Matt Booth discusses the importance of communicating for understanding at the FWP-sponsored Professional Development Event in Ankeny on Aug. 18. Photo by: Jody Peek



EMPLOYEE
SPOTLIGHT

**Al
Lange**

Title: Resource Conservationist, State Office

Alan Lange is a resource conservationist on the Ecological Sciences and Conservation Planning Team. A lifelong Iowan, Alan grew up in Ida Grove and spent much of his time on the family farms in O'Brien County. Alan's interests in agriculture, hunting, camping, fishing, skiing,

canoeing and biology have one thing in common, the outdoors. Love for the outdoors led him to Iowa State University where he earned a degree in Wildlife Biology. He began his work with NRCS as an Earth Team Volunteer in 2001. He soon became a district employee and in the Fall 2003, USDA/NRCS hired him as a Soil Conservation Technician in Boone County. From Boone his career has taken him to the Winterset, Mt Ayr and Greenfield Field Offices, and now to the NRCS State Office.

His new duties include providing assistance to field offices for technical and conservation planning related items. Alan is actively involved in the RSET pilot tests in Iowa and serves on a national RSET team.

HISTORY LESSON: WOMEN'S EQUALITY DAY

At the behest of Rep. Bella Abzug (D-NY), in 1971 the U.S. Congress designated **August 26** as "Women's Equality Day."

The date was selected to commemorate the 1920 passage of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution, granting women the right to vote. This was the culmination of a massive, peaceful civil rights movement by women that had its formal beginnings in 1848 at the world's first women's rights convention, in Seneca Falls, New York.

The observance of [Women's Equality Day](#) not only commemorates the passage of the 19th Amendment, but also calls attention to women's continuing efforts toward full equality. Workplaces, libraries, organizations, and public facilities now participate with Women's Equality Day programs, displays, video showings, or other activities.



SURVEY SAYS!!!!

Farmer Feud Host Jason Johnson introduces Team NRCS: Hillary Olson, Nevada; Emily Funk, Thompson; Alan Wedemeyer, Fort Dodge; Jackie Kragel, Algona; and Mike Henderson, Sioux City. All five were working in Conservation Central at the 2016 Farm Progress Show in Boone. The NRCS team lost a close match against the Mid-Iowa Youth Beef Team.

[SPOTLIGHT VIDEO]

Unlocking the Secrets of the Soil Health Buckets: Training Video Series



By Spring 2017 all NRCS and partner employees will receive training on the tools used to test soil health, including the evaluation tools in the Soil Health Buckets, located in every field office. The Iowa NRCS Training YouTube channel features 12 short videos, with YouTube star Jason Steele, that provide some basic how-to information and in-field demonstrations for each tool.

Folowing is a link to the Soil Health Bucket playlist: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLzjaTJc9_cKn_OSDuv2r1EWv_whBytgQ

This video is an introduction to all the tests included in the bucket: <https://youtu.be/8cNuAS9-t9g>

TRANSCRIPTS: DO'S AND DON'TS

When a job announcement requires a college transcript, you must submit a copy of your college transcripts or a list of college courses with credit hours, dates completed, and grades received to verify all education requirements (i.e. substitution of education and/or basic education requirement).

If a relevant course is not clearly qualifying (e.g. special topic, seminar, research, thesis, obscure or misleading course title, etc.), please submit an official course syllabi and/or detailed course description from the university/college for that particular course to ensure you are properly evaluated.

Please note that qualifications determinations are based solely on the information submitted for each particular vacancy announcement. You must document all requirements on every vacancy; we cannot use previous determinations as a basis for rating. All required information must be received by the closing date of the job announcement in question, and non-submission of all required documents/documentation will result in non-consideration. **Unofficial transcripts will be accepted.**



M&S
CORNER

HARVEST TRAFFIC: NATIONAL FARM SAFETY AND HEALTH WEEK



Farm safety week is Sept. 18–24, 2016, continuing a tradition dating back to 1944 when President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued the first National Farm Safety Week proclamation to help bring attention to the hazards and risks of farm work. The president has issued a proclamation every year since then.

In the seven decades since that first proclamation, farms have become a safer place. Agricultural manufacturers have introduced farm safety innovations such as the rollover protective structures (ROPS), which have saved countless lives. More recently, precision farmers have begun using drones in agriculture to inspect crops and fields, which allows farmers to inspect more acres in less time without having to walk — or drive — the fields.

Data from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) finds that farming is one of the most hazardous industries. Large tractors have blind spots. Farm equipment can take up both sides of a two-lane road and traffic increases during harvest season.

Here are some defensive-driving tips for rural roads this fall:

- As soon as you see a slow-moving vehicle (SMV) emblem, brake as if you were approaching a stop sign.
- Look for hand or turn signals from the farm vehicle operator, indicating a left turn.
- When passing, make sure you can see the farm vehicle in your rearview mirror before you get back in your lane.

While farm tractors and other farm equipment comprise a small percent of total motor vehicles nationally, the percentage of fatal motor vehicle collisions involving farm equipment is almost five

times higher than other vehicle collisions. In crashes involving farm vehicles, the farm vehicle operator was killed nearly twice as often as an occupant of the other motor vehicle.

The most likely types of collisions are left-turn and rear-end collisions. The left-turn collision happens when the farm vehicle is about to make a wide left turn and the vehicle behind begins to pass. The second most common incident is the rear-end collision, where another vehicle approaches farm equipment and is unable to slow down to avoid a collision. This happens because of large difference in travel speeds of these two types of vehicles.



Updates to the Purdue Manure Management Planner

By Eric Hurley, State Nutrient Management Specialist



For those of you using Purdue Manure Management Planner (MMP) or reviewing plans done by Technical Service Providers, a new version 0.3.6. was recently pushed out to your computer. The MMP no longer uses the yield goal method (i.e. 1.2 lbs-N/bushel

corn) to calculate the N recommendation. Rather it uses a fixed [Corn Nitrogen Rate Calculator](#) (CNRC) value representing the upper end of the Maximum Return to Nitrogen rate range using a nitrogen to corn price ratio of 0.10 (e.g. \$0.40/lb-N : \$4.00/bu-corn = 0.10). A previous update incorporated the new moist soil tests and changes in P and K recommendations in ISU's [PM 1688: A General Guide for Crop Nutrient and Limestone Recommendations in Iowa](#). With these changes, the Purdue MMP is now aligned with ISU nutrient recommendations, except for some exceptions that are described in the footnotes or text of the ISU documents.

MMP allows the planner to override the default nutrient recommendations. To use the most up-to-date research data (typically updated once per year) or if corn prices are very low relative to nitrogen, the client may want to run the CNRC directly and substitute those N recommendations.

I also think running the CNRC and printing out the reports with the graphs is a good resource for discussing the diminishing response of corn to added N. They also help highlight that the ISU N recommendation is actually a range, that on average, doesn't result in a significant difference in profits.

Generic CNRC reports along with ISU N publications are available in the "N_Rates_CNRC_2016-06-21" file on the Nutrient Management Sharepoint in NM References. This can be put into your portfolio for discussions.

The new Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan format for Purdue MMP is not available as of this writing. I expect and hope it will be available this fall.

SUPPORTING CONSERVATION: TOP 10 LIST

1. Connect sustainability of land and water resources with economic sustainability for the farm.
2. Think about what legacy we are leaving for future generations.
3. Realize that soil erosion costs farmers and landowners money in terms of lost production.
4. Protecting and improving water quality is our responsibility. Urban folks care about how we farm; water quality and soil conservation issues aren't going to go away.
5. Understanding ecology-how the whole system is connected-is critically important.
6. Stay positive-tell the general public what is going on and what practices work.
7. Water quality is long-term. Emphasize a systems approach on your land, to address soil loss and find workable answers to water quality issues.
8. Realize that everyone can do better-and everyone needs to take responsibility.
9. Share what you learn with others. Conservation pays off in terms of helping improve farming profitability.
10. We all have a role to play in taking better care of land and water resources in Iowa. Ask yourself, what are you doing for conservation?

Credit: Shared by Eric Hurley (source Marion County FO and DC John Bruene.)

2016 POLLINATOR FEST: BOONE COUNTY OUTREACH



The Boone County Soil and Water Conservation District participated in the 2016 Pollinator Fest hosted by Iowa State University in Ames. The office featured their soil health trailer, developed as part of a CIG grant.

Pictured from left to right: Beth Wessel-Kroeschell (Event Coordinator), Tom Gust (Soil Con Tech), William Peek (Farm Bill Specialist), Nathan Brockman (Curator, Christina Reiman Butterfly Wing), Andrew Kordick (Kevin Kordick's youngest son) and Kevin Kordick (DC for Boone and Jefferson FO) Photos by Jody Peek.



THE WALL THAT HEALS
VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL REPLICA & MOBILE EDUCATION CENTER
A PROGRAM OF THE VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL FUND
FOUNDERS OF THE WALL

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 29 • SUNDAY, OCTOBER 2
FRONT LAWN OF LIVING HISTORY FARMS
11121 HICKMAN ROAD, URBAN DALE, IOWA

FREE ADMISSION • OPEN 24 HOURS • RAIN OR SHINE • ALL AGES WELCOMED AND ENCOURAGED



View the 250 foot, half-replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial with more than 58,000 names of those who made the ultimate sacrifice in Vietnam. Join Team Welcome Home in remembering them and in welcoming home the Vietnam veterans during this four day event. Visit the mobile education center and plan to attend programs with speakers and a patriotic concert.

For schedule of events, sponsors and to volunteer visit www.TeamWelcomeHomeIowa.com

HONORING VETERANS: THE WALL THAT HEALS SEPT 29-OCT. 2

On Veterans Day 1996, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund (VVMF) unveiled a half-scale replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C., designed to travel to communities throughout the United States. Since its dedication, The Wall That Heals has visited more than 400 cities and towns throughout the nation, spreading the Memorial's healing legacy to millions.

The traveling exhibit provides thousands of veterans who have been unable to cope with the prospect of facing The Wall to find the strength and courage to do so within their own communities, thus allowing the healing process to begin.

Iowans can visit The Wall That Heals for free at Living History Farms in Des Moines from Sept 29 to Oct. 2.

Changes In IOWA NRCS PERSONNEL

| NAME | TITLE | NATURE OF ACTION | EFFECTIVE DATE | LOCATION |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Diaz Pacheco, Urayoan | Soil Conservationist | Reassignment | 6/26/16 | Carroll |
| Fardner, Bradely D. | Soil Conservationist | Career Cond. Appt. | 6/26/16 | Clarinda MU |
| Hanson, Rebecca R. | Soil Conservationist | Promotion | 6/26/16 | Thompson MU |
| Hawks, Joshua William | Soil Conservationist Tech. | Promotion | 6/26/16 | Sac City MU |
| Sellers, Laurel | Soil Conservationist | Conversion to Career Cond Appt. | 7/10/16 | Greenfield |
| Solheim, Kelsi Kim | Program Assistant | Promotion | 8/7/16 | Area 3 Programs |
| Stephen, Taslima K. | Soil Conservationist | Career Cond. Appt. | 7/10/16 | Clarion |

Changes In IDALS-DSC PERSONNEL

| NAME | TITLE | NATURE OF ACTION | EFFECTIVE DATE | LOCATION |
|------------------|-------------------------|------------------|----------------|-------------------------|
| Luke, Jessica | Conservation Technician | New Employee | 7/29/16 | E. Pott. SWCD |
| Dirksen, Carolyn | Conservation Assistant | Retirement | 7/29/16 | Butler & Franklin SWCDs |
| Powell, Steve | Conservation Technician | Retirement | 7/29/16 | Taylor SWCD |

Left Employment with Central Office:

Emma Wilson – Water Quality Initiative Intern – July 12, 2016

Central Office New Employee:

Felicia Campbell – Water Resources Bureau - Environmental Specialist – August 3, 2016
 Felicia will be in Davis SWCD, Davis SWCD, 402 Karr Ave, Ste 2, Bloomfield, IA 52537
 Phone: 641-664-2600 ext. 3
 Email: Felicia.campbell@iowaagriculture.gov

